

REMARKS

In the outstanding Office Action, claims 1 – 38 were subjected to an election of species requirement. By this response, an election is made without traverse. Claim 1 is amended to recite the features of claim 2, which is accordingly cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 3, 27, and 35 are amended to depend from amended claim 1.

Election Requirement Summary

The Examiner has deemed that the present claims lack unity of invention because they are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rules 13.1 and 13.2. The Examiner has required election of a single species to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. The species were identified by the Examiner as follows:

Species A: Figures 1A – 7D, and deemed to correspond to claims 1–15 and 17–38.

Species B: Figures 8A– 8B, and deemed to correspond to claims 1, 7, 8, 14, 16, 21, and 25.

The Examiner asserts that claims 1, 7, 8, 14, 16, 21, and 25 are generic.

Response

Applicants elect, without traverse, to continue prosecution of Species A, and further amends claim 1 to include the features of claim 2. Accordingly, claim 2 is cancelled, claim 16 is withdrawn from consideration, and claims 1, 3 – 15, and 17 – 38 are presented for examination on the merits.

Applicants make the above amendments and cancellations without prejudice or disclaimer, and reserves the right to pursue the subject matter of the original claims, including original claims 1 and 2 and those claims originally dependent therefrom, in one or more continuing application.

Rejoinder

Applicants respectfully remind the Examiner that upon the allowance of a generic claim, Applicants will be entitled to consideration of additional species which include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim. Thus, should the Examiner determine that generic claim 1 is allowable, Applicants request examination of withdrawn claim 16 dependent therefrom.

CONCLUSION

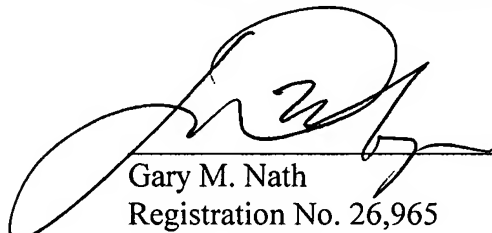
In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to conduct a first substantive examination of claims 1, 3 – 15, and 17 – 38.

The Examiner is welcomed to contact the undersigned at the below-listed number and address with any questions or comments regarding this matter.

Respectfully submitted,
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